

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

April 1, 2009

Harold W. Geisel, Acting Inspector General
U.S. Department of State
2201 C Street, N.W.
Washington, DC 20520

Dear Mr. Inspector General:

On February 11, 2009, we wrote to Secretary Clinton to express our concern over continued U.S. contributions to the United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA).

On March 5, 2009, the Department responded to us that it "continued to value UNRWA as an instrumental counterweight to extremism in the region." "Significantly," the Department's letter continued, "UNRWA continues to prioritize education in Gaza, which we view as a critical investment in the human capital of a future Palestinian state – educated young people are less susceptible to Hamas recruitment and more invested in a peaceful future for their people."

On March 25, 2009, UNRWA employees held their union elections in Gaza. According to the *Jerusalem Post*, the voting was conducted at UNRWA's main headquarters in the Gaza Strip with some 10,100 UNRWA workers participating in the election – a 97 percent turnout.

According to the *Palestinian Information Center* and the *Jerusalem Post*, HAMAS participated in the election and won 17 out of 27 total seats. Of particular concern, HAMAS reportedly won all 11 seats of the UNRWA teacher's union, which means HAMAS will control all UNRWA-run schools in Gaza.

As you know, HAMAS is a designated foreign terrorist organization responsible for the murders of 26 American citizens (Annex 1). We hope you would agree that UNRWA schools run by a HAMAS-controlled teachers' union cannot fulfill the Department's stated goals for education in Gaza.


In our view, UNRWA employees running on the HAMAS slate for the agency's union elections – and HAMAS' apparent control of UNRWA schools in Gaza – represents a dangerous influence on the neutrality of UNRWA. Therefore, we ask you to investigate and report back to the Congress on whether HAMAS control over the UNRWA teacher's union violates Section 301(c) of the Foreign Assistance Act.

Sincerely,



Steven R. Rothman
Member of Congress

Mark Steven Kirk
Member of Congress



Shelley Berkley
Member of Congress

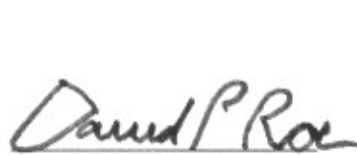

Scott Garrett
Member of Congress


Bill Foster
Member of Congress


Sue Myrick
Member of Congress


Jim Gerlach
Member of Congress


Paul Broun
Member of Congress


David Roe
Member of Congress


Dan Burton
Member of Congress

Annex 1: David Applebaum of Ohio; Nava Applebaum, 20, of Ohio; Alan Beer of Ohio; Marla Bennet of California; Benjamin Blutstein of Pennsylvania; David Boim, 17, of New York; Yael Botwin, 14, of California; Dina Carter of North Carolina; Janis Ruth Coulter of Massachusetts; Sara Duker of New Jersey; Matthew Eisenfeld of Connecticut; Tzvi Goldstein of New York; Judith Greenbaum of New Jersey; David Gritz of Massachusetts; Dina Horowitz of Florida; Rabbi Eli Horowitz of Illinois; Tehilla Nathanson, 3, of New York; Malka Roth, 15, of New York; Mordechai Reinitz of New York; Yitzhak Reinitz, 9, of New York; Leah Stern of New Jersey; Goldie Taubenfeld of New York; Shmuel Taubenfeld, 3 months, of New York; Nachshon Wachsman, 19, of New York; Ira Weinstein of New York; and Yitzhak Weinstock, 19, of California.